

HB 821 -- Elementary and Secondary Education

Sponsor: Montecillo

This bill changes the laws regarding elementary and secondary education. In its main provisions the bill:

(1) Changes the basis of the school year from requiring both 174 days and 1044 hours to requiring 1080 hours without specifying the number of days. This change also eliminates the requirements for a minimum school day, school week, and four-day week, and adjusts the make-up time for any school missed for inclement weather from six days to 36 hours;

(2) Requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to recognize a district's community involvement programs, training for teacher evaluators, and full-day kindergarten for certain student populations under the school improvement program;

(3) Requires \$1 million annually for teacher evaluator training;

(4) Repeals the provisions that require the Commissioner of Education to receive approval from the Joint Committee on Education for certain expenditures;

(5) Repeals expired phase-in provisions from the education foundation formula and sets increasing percentage targets to achieve full funding for fiscal years 2015 to 2017;

(6) Establishes, beginning in the 2014-15 school year, a mandatory school age of five years of age in the St. Louis and Kansas City public schools, unless the child is home-schooled. The department must report the effects of lowering the mandatory school age on academic performance to the Joint Committee on Education; and

(7) Requires the department, in conjunction with the State Highway Patrol, to implement a real-time information system for the criminal history background check required for teachers and other school personnel.

The provisions regarding the mandatory school age in St. Louis and Kansas City public schools will expire six years after the effective date.